

# e Has Pain in Main



MSN/Frank Lamoreaux

ow-key in the Southland that Malibu's broken water main minds as long as the interviews don't slow the work down.

nd moved the underground utility line. Some homes experienced complete lack of water service while her households were left with w water pressure, according to organ. "About five percent of alibu was down," he said. The city spokesperson said it ould take three to four days to harge the system and offered me advice to residents. "We ed to get people to turn off their

landscaping irrigation. If everybody would cut back and conserve," Morgan said. "It would be a big help." He said this would mean less disruption for all. "Our system is just marginal. We all have service when everything is perfect," said Morgan, who added that water district engineers are looking at ways to resolve the ever-present problem of the shifting earth.

BY BILL KOENEKER

## City's 'No Sunday' Regulations to Be Sheriff's Station pt New Enforcement Efforts

City of Malibu Code Enforcement Officer Sarah Maurice indicated that numerous comments have been received. Maurice indicated that calls will be rred to the sheriff's department during the hours that Malibu Hall is closed. Maurice noted that the legal rs for construction work are

place on Sundays or holidays. "This is for construction of any kind, including earth moving equipment on private property," wrote Maurice in a recent city report on the matter. "Anyone claiming to have 'special permission' to work on Sunday must show written proof from the office of the city manag-

# Fire Expert Says City Has Increased Its Disaster Risk

## La Costa Standards Criticized

A noted fire expert and the vice president of the National Foundation for Environmental Safety has challenged the City of Malibu's response to the 1993 fires and the 1994-95 floods as a case of the local government "largely succumbing to political pressures by special interest groups."

which the city council refused to reopen last week, is an example of the reward-and-punish logic.

Radtke, long an advocate of fire preparedness on the part of individual property owners, says the city's action in La Costa means that "with public disaster aid assistance, the development footprint is being increased in a pre-existing high fire zone and within proximity to landslides."

"...[using] public assistance, [a city can] create another design for disaster."

Klaus Radtke, who authored the original Los Angeles County Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Safety in the Chaparral/Urban Interface, has been a vocal critic of how most local governments "rationalize away disasters and, with public assistance, create another design for disaster."

He said this policy has the effect of "greatly increasing the overall potential for [Malibu] financial losses in the future and with it the demand for public assistance and liability to the community as a whole."

In a letter to the Malibu City Council last week, Radtke stressed that "man-made calamities should not be continuously confused with 'Acts of God.'" He said "the lifestyle of people living in slide-, flood- and fire-prone communities" contributes to the disasters that occur, whatever the nature of their origin.

Radtke told the council, "This raises the point that not only the immediate 'victims,' but the public as a whole should have a greater voice in the standards required for rebuilding in disaster-prone areas." He reminded the council that the public subsidizes "questionable and risky development in fire-prone wildlands on a daily basis."

Radtke wrote that the council members had the opportunity to "cut the dependence on constant public assistance and reduce the magnitude and impact of such 'man-made' disasters." He expressed the view that the council allowed its post-fire-and-flood deliberations to be framed in "emotional and political" contexts, in which those who may not have prepared properly or chose to disregard natural constraints are "victims" to be rewarded for their "losses." Ironically, this could

He said the city had the opportunity to focus on "environmental impact assessment and address neighborhood-wide cumulative impacts, [but] unfortunately, the City of Malibu, like so many disaster-prone communities, did not follow this course." Instead, he said, "Supported by public funding, it allowed property owners to rebuild destroyed residences at an increase in scale